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THE Pamphlet Mission FOR FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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The PAMPHLET MISSION has been established for the purpose of publishing a fortnightly series of Liberal Religious pamphlets on the Unity, the Evolution, the Doctrines, the Bibles, and the Leaders of Religion; on the Relations of Religion to Science, to Devotion and Conduct, and on kindred topics, written by men whose word combines Liberal thought with religious feeling. Each pamphlet will contain an Essay or Sermon, (original or reprint,) together with from six to ten pages of "Notes and News," made up of short editorials, gleanings from the freshest religious thought, and news-items about Liberal work, Liberal books, etc. It is hoped that the publication will meet the want not only of persons already connected with Liberal organizations, but also, especially, of *isolated Liberals*—the fives and tens and twenties in small towns—men and women thirsty for such words as these pamphlets will carry. Besides their use in the home, they can do good service among friends and neighbors, as well as furnish regular material for Sunday meetings and discussions in places hardly to be reached by Liberal preachers.

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Destructive and Constructive Liberalism.

A paper read at the Western Unitarian Conference, June 6, 1878, by W. C. Gannett.

"Resolved, That the Western Unitarian Conference conditions its fellowship by no dogmatic tests, but welcomes all thereto who desire to work with it in advancing the Kingdom of God."

Strictly speaking, Nature knows no ruins. Although in Nature forms are always changing, she always unbuilds *into* buildings,—as if the stones of the cathedral, in tumbling down, should arrange themselves in shanties, or the shanties, in vanishing, should erect themselves into the cathedral. What to us is ruin, to her is new creation. Over the black char left by the fire, we say "My property is lost!" Nature says "See my new cinders: what perfect cinders they are!" *She* never loses property; for what she loses in one shape is recovered on the instant in another,—every atom. On the other hand, she makes no money; for what she gains in one shape she loses in some other,—every atom. If we say, as well we may, being only men and women and not gods, that this question of form is, after all, the main point; that there are lower forms and higher forms; that it is no empty prepossession that makes us call one part of Nature's process, "growth," the other part, "decay," but that in reality there is a rhythm in her movement, with now retreat of force, now access of it; that, for instance, in to-day's green marvel of construction, named the "June," there is intenser life than the Decembers know; although all this is true, none the less it is true that June comes not but by December's loss, nor a December save between two Junes. One form vanishes to make room for the other.

In Nature, then, the very same fact, looked at from one side is destruction,—looked at from the other, is construction. Each process involves the other. And this is universal law.

DECEMBERS AND JUNES OF FAITH.

Now human thinking is a part of Nature. Ideas and ideals are a part of Nature. In this realm also, therefore, look to see the law.

With some right we even talk of *seasons* in religious faith. "Ages of belief" and "ages of unbelief," we say. The fourth century before Christ was an age of waning beliefs: call it the October of the Classic faith. The Christian era was an age of unbelief,—a winter of religious discontent: call that, December. The fourth century after Christ was already the full-budded April of a new religion; and the mediæval centuries its sultry summer. Since then, we have seen fall and winter-days again,—if the chattering teeth we hear so often round us chatter truly over the decay of Faith. In the sweep of time I suspect our present centuries *will* show as the late autumn rather than as early spring,—an autumn ripening seed for a rarer spring of Faith than man's soul has ever known.

But, on the narrower scale, the processes of which we speak are so coeval and continuous that the June and the December of belief are represented not in successive eras only, but in one and the same day by *different classes of minds*. Minds that affirm and minds that deny, minds that construct and minds that destroy, live and work next door to one another.

Which of the two classes you and I belong to in our day, is a matter that depends not over-largely on our wills. It is a matter of temperament, of education, of circumstances, rather than of will. We can hardly help being a doubter; another is predestined for belief. What are your instincts—to accept or to examine? is the first question. What sort of intellectual atmosphere have you been bred in? is the next question. What sort of experience have you had,—the kind that makes you cry, "How beautiful it is to be alive!" or that which makes you ask, "Is life worth living?" is the next. *Then* comes the question, Have you treated your mind fairly, done what you could to offset the biasses of temperament and narrowing conditions, and yet, in the liberation, to keep yourself

from other biasses and from reactions beyond the line of reason?

Whichever class we belong to—the constructors or the destroyers,—it is well to remember that the other class is not to be greatly blamed, then, for being the other: and again, that it is well for the world that there *is* the other. If all affirmed, where would the new truths come from? for universal affirmations would pretty surely be acclaims of the moment's orthodoxy, and the moment would then lengthen to the century. If all denied, where were the stability that steadies the generation, and organizes the truth already reached into moral instincts and ever-sure ideals? We certainly cannot escape, but besides the non-escape, we need our constructors, our system-makers and our vast, slow-moving armies of believing followers. No more can we escape, not less need we, our doubters, our destroyers, the relentlessness of critics, even the smashings of iconoclasts at times. I speak not of the millenium, but of the Now. In the Now, each class involves, compels, begets the other: and in the rhythms of their opposing zeals, the ideas and ideals of a time declare themselves. The "spirit of the age," the "tendency of thought" is the resultant of the two.

And more than this: construction and destruction are not only represented in different classes of minds in the same day, and it is well that they are, but they are also represented in different moods of the same mind, and it is well that that is so. If you never doubt, woe unto you! You are in danger of the judgment of stagnations, petrifications. If you never believe, woe unto you as great! You are in danger of perpetual unrest, the toss of the shoreless seas. The discontent is as divine as the content. It takes both to reach the great contentments. Never doubting, you will never grandly believe,—never, or hardly, come to the central faith which a human heart, facing the glad and solemn mystery of life, attains. If, between fifteen and thirty, we have never taken sea-voyages of doubt, we are likely to be provincials in religion all our lives.

But, even as it is not given us to altogether fix our ruling cast of mind, no more is it given us to altogether manage these

moods of mind, that is, if we treat our minds as adult minds. The Roman Catholic, and his first cousins Protestant, can say to one belief, "Go," and it goeth, and to another, "Come," and it cometh; but that is because they professedly treat their minds not as adult, but as child-minds. When the Doubt comes, we *ought* to entertain it. Drive not away the Angel unawares! The only wrong in doubt is the wrong of inhospitality to it. When the Faith comes, how glad to welcome that, having earned and tested it by doubt!

In history, then, at large, watching the sweep of centuries, —in the history of a single generation, watching the two classes of neighbor minds,—in the history of a single soul, watching the moods of its own unrest and rest, we see the double process of destruction and construction going on in religious faith.

No dishonor then, no scorn, no twitting, no rebuke, to ages of unbelief, or men of unbelief, or moods of our own unbelief: they are the December that prepares for June. But now if, by Nature's grace, you have the mind of June, or if, having been through December you have passed on to June, and in utter simplicity and with rejoicing eyes can word your faith in songs and prayers and *Credos*, you are the happy soul,—yea, the happiest, and, I take it, the most helpful soul to men. For June *is* the high-tide of the year. Blossoms and grasses and waving trees, and insect-hum and bird-song and children's out-door life and man's free entry into Nature, are what all love rather than the winter's snow. It is a higher phase of Nature; it is the cathedral forming out of shanties, it is more of *life*. Foolish you and I, to ape a June we do not feel! Foolish you and I, to scramble into another's June on mere tradition or authority, and call it ours and play the bigot to those who do not scramble after us! But wise, happy you and I, if we have really reached our own June, and built it up in all its marvel out of the very elements that made the frozen crystals in the winter of our discontent!

THE DESTRUCTIVE LIBERAL.

I am dwelling over-long on this, the necessary rhythm of

destruction and construction of beliefs in the progress of religious life. Constructive and destructive *Liberalism* is the theme. And what is "Liberalism?" It is the nineteenth century name for the beliefs and disbeliefs of the party that comes between the church-masses and those who, by their own preference take the names "Infidel," "Materialist," "Agnostic," or "Atheist." It is the name of a party, therefore, that includes many shades of belief and disbelief. Minds a little outside of orthodox creeds to those far outside of all religious institutions whatever, while still inside of religious faiths, group together under this common title—they are "Liberals.'

The two parties on their right and left are pretty strongly marked off from them. Every one knows what the "Church" is in its varying forms, so definite are its several constructions of belief, called "creeds." Almost as definite in non-beliefs is the opposite body. And wherever the Church is strongest, most imperious in its claims to knowledge or to authority over life, there, as natural consequence, we find the Infidel or Materialist or Atheist most defiant. (I use these names with no tang of reproach, but as the self-chosen names of those they represent.) These, most defiant. We have loud voiced lecturers and free-spoken talkers against orthodoxy in our own land, but if we would see Unbelief most fierce, we must go to the land of the Established Churches,—to Paris, and listen to the workmen brought up under the shadows of the Roman Catholic cathedrals, the men of the last Commune; or to German Capitals, and watch the men born under Protestant established creeds;—to Berlin, for example, where, the other day, we might have watched a procession of ten thousand men and women marching behind the coffin of Heinsch, the Socialist leader, to a cemetery over whose gate is inscribed the words, "There is no hereafter and no future meeting."

Here among ourselves, you know how it is. In this city how many there are, both men and women, to whom this church, even if the windows were less scrupulously Christian, would be as unlikely a place for them to come to with their beliefs and

feelings, as any of the churches round us. And even among those who count themselves as "Liberals" in America, and perhaps take real interest in churches, how many reach their height of church-joy, not in any sign of faith they hear or see, but in the signs of non-belief, of antagonism to the neighbor-churches. These men represent "destructive" Liberalism,—that which stands for criticism and rebuke and iconoclasm; that which loves to dwell upon the inperfections of existing systems, to pick the flaws out in the popular Scriptures, to point to the blots upon the life of church-professors, to hold up the glaring surface-immoralities of certain wide-spread doctrines, and to insist on the worthlessness of the whole system of religions thus based and advocated. These are the men who declare a Holy War on Christianity;—like the Lion-Heart who conducts the *Index:* but the noblest form of the Crusader, he. Kin to him, I judge, are the men who, no less conscientiously, declare the Holy War on Moody.

In my own mind I count these in as "Liberals;" but with some difficulty often, and almost by resolving to see beliefs below their uttered disbeliefs, to see real trusts and affirmations of their own below the ridicule, which they so much more freely speak, of other people's trusts and affirmations. These men earn their place in Nature by the more good than harm which, on the whole, they do: and so far as they speak simply, conscientiously, earnestly, without gloating over the imperfections they discover, without enjoying the scrimmage with men who treat Infidelity precisely as they are treating Orthodoxy,—without, I say, enjoying the scrimmage for its own sake, apart from any good they do by it,—so far as that, one has to honor them, however hard it is to enjoy them, and however little he may like their method. For surely there is a more excellent way of being a Liberal and doing a Liberal's good. If we can be constructors; if, by the proportion which our beliefs bear to our non-beliefs, our trusts to our doubts, our real affirmations to our denials, we must be constructors, by all means let us indulge our impulse or our need, and be the Liberals of that kind.

Your non-belief may help it is true: your belief will more surely help,—yourself and the neighbors. Your doubt may be just the tonic that you need, or a friend needs to drink at your giving, but your trust is the bread of life, of hourly, daily, yearly life on which your mind and heart and hands and feet will thrive and work; and this trust, too, is what will spread health in your neighborhood. Robert Ingersoll, asked if he could really suggest any improvement in God's universe, answered promptly, "Yes: if I managed things, I would make *health* catching instead of disease." That is just what God has largely done in matters of the mind and soul,—and perhaps more largely done in matters of the body than we yet know enough to recognize. Trust *is* catching: glad faith is catching: supreme reliance on Eternal Right, quiet hope in an Eternal Love is catching. Show, live, be that trust, reliance, hope, and round your circle you are one who carries virtue in your very presence. It is not that I am going, necessarily, to catch your affirmation in catching the faith and cheer that lie inside your affirmation: your idea may reach me, but also it may not. I may know too little or too much to take that. It is your attitude, your affirmative spirit, your believing tone, that inspires me and that I "catch,"—transferring it, perhaps, to very different ideas.

The Constructive Liberal.

Now let us, in a little more detail, dwell on what the Constructive Liberal will try to construct,—remembering what was at the beginning, that every such construction involves a corresponding destruction of the opposite thing.

1. An Apostle of Free Thinking with Wide Sympathies, in Religion.

First of all, middle of all, last of all, he will try to construct a certain *temper of mind:* not certain *contents* of mind, however valuable, not any "beliefs" or "ideas" whatever, as essential. Important as the latter are, they are subordinate. The Unitarian is not necessarily a Liberal; the Liberal is by no means necessarily a Unitarian. And just hereby he is dis-

tinguished from all other religious constructors of the Church: they would probably phrase their first and most important aim as the construction of certain great beliefs, without which, they feel sure that one cannot be "religious." The constructing Liberal, on the other hand, emphasizes as his first and most important aim, a certain temper of mind. What temper? That which will beget noble and nobler beliefs—the temper of *freedom and courage in thinking;* the temper which is only afraid of fear, and of ignorance, and of blindness to thoughts good and beautiful. The temper of trust in Reason as the Divine Spirit of Light in man, which guides to larger outlooks: not the temper which narrows this Reason to the eyes and ears alone, but that which bids her watch the inside consciousness as well, and report the data of conscience and emotion, and thus couple the unseen and the seen world in her guesses and conclusions. The temper which is not afraid to not-believe, but which is is not afraid to believe, either; and, what is practically a very different thing, which is not afraid to *utter* either the belief or non-belief.

Yet this free courage is only one part of the Liberal's temper. Another part is a *sympathy* with ideas that one does not share himself; a spirit that, in judging such ideas, constantly prompts one to put himself in the other's place and see the thought from the inside, where its believers stand, as well as from the outside; a spirit of mind that compels you, even for your own sake, to go round a thought and see it back and front, and accept it in the large and balanced way,—or reject it in the large and balanced way, if it is to be rejected. There was a good word lately in the *Pamphlet Mission*, quoted from the *Christian Register:* "'Don't you think I am liberal?' says my friend, who is surprised at an idea. 'No,' I reply; 'you are a tolerant, but you are not liberal.' 'And what is the difference?' he asks. 'Tolerance' is a kind of moral sense of the mind that allows to others what it asks for itself,—the right to think soberly and honestly, without passion or self-will. It is a duty, like paying your debts, or telling the truth. It

has no imagination or moral sympathy. It is simply a matter-of-fact, practical, Chinese quality that gives as good as it takes. 'Liberality' is an *ability*, an endowment. *Can* you? It is inclusive, and finds the kindred tie that runs through things different. It is a grace of soul, a climate of reason, a latitude and longitude of thought and feeling, within which varied fruits are ripened and many races have their dwelling-place. Tolerance is founded in conscience; liberality is founded in reason and imagination." So says Horatio Stebbins: "Liberality is founded in reason and imagination." It takes somewhat of a poet to be a Liberal. His "reason and imagination" are but other words for what I have been describing as Free Courage and Sympathy: and taken together, fused into each other, they make up the temper of mind on which the Constructive Liberal first and last insists as the all important arm. This, as against all *Il*liberals, *i. e.* as against all, whatever name they bear, in sect or out of sect, in church or scorning church, who make any conviction whatever, be it of "God" or "Life Immortal," the matter of first moment in religion, and who condition fellowship on that conviction. *The Right Mind* as greater than the right belief *in* mind,—that is the recognition we would fain construct: the right belief as greater than the right mind and limit of religious sympathy,—that is the error that our construction will destroy. It is a high ideal, friends, and it should make us feel, as we look around upon the world to-day, that we have a work to do. A nobler work than spreading noble *views* it is to spread a noble *temper*. To the Liberal is entrusted this higher apostleship. Are you in your town, I in mine, faithful to our mission?

2. As Apostle of Religious Feeling.

The Liberal's second hope, I should think, would be to go out as *the apostle of religious feeling* towards the new Universe which Science has revealed so startlingly to man during our last century. A new Universe,—is it too much to call it that? What the Copernican discovery was three centuries since,—that the earth is but a little circling point within the rim of a vast

wheel, instead of being the central hub of all, our late discoveries in all paths of space and time have been to modern eyes. And Religion has not yet taken possession of this new Universe with a realizing faith. It is too vast,—too infinitely small; too old,—too freshly born of every instant; too mysterious in its depths of unknownness, too majestic in its surface-laws that we call known. Our old religious conceptions are trying to take on ampler measures to fit the Order now made manifest; are trying with much difficulty, with much resistance from the established creeds. On the other hand, men delighted with the great discoveries there are, and many of them, who seem to feel that into this Universe, so vast, so law-ruled, so passing comprehension, yet inviting to all comprehension—that into this new Universe Religion must not intrude. No ideas of God, of Life, of providence, no worship, we are told, can fit it.

True enough, that no ideas can fit it. And now, while men on one side are holding back from accepting it through fear that religion may suffer from acceptance, and on the other side, men who do accept it, and because they do, are throwing away their old feelings of awe and reverence and worship, who shall step forward, and uncover his head and his feet and bare his very heart and mind, and say before the world, "I see, I accept it all, all, all! and no 'ideas' can fit it; and yet it mooves me, and it shall yet move men everywhere, to worship such as they have never prayed with before, to a trust and gladness such as they have never felt!" The *Liberal*,—it is part of his blessed function to thus stand at the threshhold and be doorkeeper to the Sanctuary, and say to men, "Come, see the Temple which the Lord hath builded: let our hearts keep silence before him!" That is the Liberal's second "construction," as I understand it,—the affirmation that religious feeling is in place and of necessity, even when not attached, as it has been, to definite conceptions of God and Immortality and Revelation. We are entering on an age when men of the best sense and humblest reverence will probably confess more thoughtfully than ever how very little they know of the great mysteries; on an

age when loud-voiced, creed-built assertions will be more than ever the monopoly of the smaller minds and less trustful hearts: and yet these old feelings, last, yea, outlast, deepen, gather volume. And it is the Liberal's part, at this early day, (his church-brethren will soon be joining him), to assure fearers on the one hand, and deniers on the other. "*You* know not yet the depths of awe, nor *you*, as yet, the beginnings of the awe and love, that this world of God, in which we live, is yet to move in men." What he will destroy will be the fancy in his Orthodox friend, that such feelings go only with this or that belief,—the fancy in his Materialist friend, that such feelings vanish as the mind recognizes the greatness and order of the Universe.

3. As Apostle of Religious Ideas.

But is the Liberal, among his constructions, to construct no definite *ideas* at all? Apostle of the broad and sympathetic mind in religion, apostle of feeling in religion, is he not to be the apostle also of any positive convictions in religion? I think he is, but that this is not his special mission. Ideas, inspiring as they are, are the least thing to need apostleship: for they will take possession of the age through a thousand channels of access, if channels are but kept open. And yet he *will* be their apostle, because he cannot help it. In proportion to his freedom and his feeling, the thought within will rush out of his mouth in words that will construct in others the faith majestic in his own mind. He will affirm the *Unity* of things. He will affirm the presence of universal *Law* as one with universal Right and Love. He will delight to trace this Living Unity working out by law the processes of Growth in all things. He will affirm the *Religious Nature of Man*, and the naturalness of Religion, therefore. He will affirm the sympathy between the differing forms of man's religiousness. He will affirm that Science and Religion are one when in their deeper being,—but I will not tell you all he will affirm. Such emphases as these, such positive convictions, positively worded, will be all the time breaking from him as leaves break out along the tree-

limbs in the Spring, because the sap is running full inside. He will tire you with reiterations of them. If he be a preacher, you will send him off in his third year because you will have found out all he holds, as he holds and talks so little but his "Liberalism." And perhaps that is the best thing you can do with him, for it will set him going somewhere else, and "as he goes, he preaches." Yes, be sure, the Liberal has positive ideas and rejoices to be their apostle, and by construction of these better thoughts he displaces and destroys the poorer.

HIS EMPHASIS ON CENTRAL TRUTHS.

Rather than tell you what they are, let me throw a last moment's stress upon this word just spoken,—that he will destroy *by* constructing rather than destroy *to* construct. That method involves such deeds as these: the proportioning of emphasis, so that the greater truths shall be the truths most often urged, and an utter truthfulness in speaking all truths, great or small.

The *proportioning of emphasis*. That will keep him largely on ground common to all religious men; for our differences are vastly less than our agreements. When you throw emphasis on that which makes you brave in trial, strong in pain, grateful in joy, quiet in death, you can hardly help stating something very simple that the Roman Catholic and the Evangelical also believe. What is more, it will the essential thing in their belief. What is still more, they won't know it is the essential thing, and will deny it is, and will call you "Infidel" for saying so. And then you must be patient and bold and stick to your "absurdity"—that you and they *are* stating one faith in your deepest affirmations. By dint of sticking to it a great while, and explaining a great many times the difference between substance and form, inside meaning and outside symbol, and that you do differ from each other very widely in the forms and symbols, oft agreeing in the essence, of beliefs, they at last may catch the distinction and begin to understand you, and thanks to you, become a little "liberalized." So, too, with the man who calls himself "Materialist" and "Atheist": he, again, cannot see what you mean by "essential agreements," right-away; but if

you stick to your absurdity manfully, his eyes will open slowly, and at fifty you will see him soften. That softening towards those who differ from him will be your missionary-harvest.

His Trutheulness.

Truthfulness of statement,—that is the rest of his method. A simple thing, you think? Then why isn't there more of it? How is it that among the other apostles that the world needs, it needs so much apostles of religious honesty? I mean men and women who cannot conceive the possibility of hiding doubt, or blurring statements, or tapering phases, or claiming a name not truly theirs, or exaggerating a belief,—in matters of religion. There is a Church that does great good: it is the "Broad Church," so called; and is made up of adherents of all the differing sects. Wise, true-hearted men in it. All reverence for them! And yet,—with charity tempering the indignation, yet be it frankly said,—there is an honesty in religious utterances that the Broad Church-man, as a type of speaker, sadly fails to reach. *He* is not the apostle that the world is waiting for in this direction: and I know not where he is, unless again the Liberal steps forward, quietly, not defiantly, not as a man parading honesty but as one who cannot help being honest, and in name, phrase, motto, confession and assertion shows that it is possible to state the extremest truth, in the exactest form he can, I in the enthusiastic way,—and yet not give offense!

A temper, then, of mind,—the free, yet sympathetic, temper; religious feeling; great ideas,—but these taught in such a way as to teach that temper and that feeling as ever more momentous than the ideas,—taught, too, with simple fearlessness but with emphasis proportioned to their real importance: these, I take it, are the three "Constructions" that the Liberal will aim at. To put the matters in one word, he is to be the apostle, not so much of better *views*, as of a better *method* in religion.

Notes and News.

We desire subscribers to take notice that our volume begins with No. 1, (March 1,) and it is supposed that all persons subscribing wish to have back numbers sent from the beginning, unless they othewise order.

Will each subscriber send us the address of five friends likely to welcome our little Fortnightly? Then *postal* a word of recommendation to each one, saying that a copy will be sent him, and that his subscription is solicited. A few words scattered at one of the Chicago meetings, followed by a quiet reaper passing down each row of seats, brought in a harvest of subscriptions on the spot. We beg the delegates to remember the appeal and turn sowers in their respective towns. *The "* Pamphlet Mission *" depends upon its* Mission-*aries.*

We never suspected that staid Dr. Hedge had such a terrific volcano of wrath pent up in him as burst out in the *Register* of June 8, and poured its hot scoria and burning lava over poor E. C. Towne in chastisement for his dreadful article on "Unitarian Hagada," in the *Register* of June 1. Of course there is no such thing, and Mr. Towne ought to have known it, as Hagada among Unitarians. Or, if there is, of course it is grossly improper and presumptuous to call it by that name. And especially was it unpardonable in Mr. Towne to mention anybody like Dr. Furness in connection with it. But this is not quite plain English. What we want to say, put in the simplest words, is, we regret the few personalities (we think Dr. Hedge vastly exagerates them,) which, it must be confessed, somewhat marred Mr. Towne's otherwise most admirable *Register* article. We speak for many others besides ourselves, when we say that we regret far more still the spirit of Dr. Hedge's reply. Suppose that Dr. Hedge, instead of writing a reply so evidently prompted by "certain cold prepossessions toward Mr. Towne," had written a sweet answer, commending the scholarship and ability—yes, and the very large measure of truth too,—manifest in Mr. Towne's article, (which almost nobody is so well qualified to appreciate as Dr. Hedge himself,) and at the same time had vindicated Dr. Furness, and pointed out Mr. Towne's perhaps unjustifiable personalities, only in a fair and kindly spirit, how much better it would have comported with what we have learned to expect from the learned Doctor whom we all so much delight to honor?

A Liberal Conference is to be held July 9-11 in Strawberry Point, Iowa. Rev. S. S. HUNTING of Davenport, Rev. OSCAR CLUTE of Keokuk, and Rev. J. L. JONES of Janesville, Wis., we understand have promised to be present, to help Rev. S. W. SAMPLE, the pastor. Mr. SAMPLE writes us: "Our Liberal movement here deepens in interest and power as the weeks roll on. Present prospects are good. We might almost call our work here a people's church. I have recently completed arrangements with the Elkader people (Elkader is the county seat of Clayton County,) for services there every alternate Sunday for six months. I am also preaching alternate Sunday afternoons at another point six miles away. It is my earnest desire to secure missionary work during week-days within reasonable distance of Strawberry Point,—both lecturing on behalf of the Liberal League movement, and preaching and lecturing on behalf of Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion. I hunger and thirst to preach the New Faith, our sweet and glorious Gospel, recompense or no recompense."

The following are some of the subjects upon which Mr. SAMPLE desires to speak: (1) Freedom and Fellowship. (2) Character. (3) Reasonable Faith. (4) Man, his own world-builder and God-builder. (5) What is Infidelity? (6) Truths and Errors of Orthodoxy.

The Pan-Anglican Council.—The second Pan-Anglican Council, or general Conference of the bishops of the Anglican Church, will meet at Lambeth Palace, July 2, and continue in session four weeks—Dr. TAIT, archbishop of Canterbury, presiding. The first Council was held eleven years ago, and attracted very general attention. This will probably attract somewhat less, yet it will be a very notable event in the religious world, as the Council represents the third largest section of Christendom. The more important of the subjects to be discussed at the gathering have been announced. Some of these are such as appertain strictly to the Anglican Communion, and have little interest to persons outside: while others, as for example the question "What are the best methods of dealing with modern infidelity?" are questions which the entire religious world is interested in. Says the *Boston Advertiser*: "It is a difficult matter for such a gathering to deal with the questions of modern thought, but it is an encouraging fact that the Anglican body does not propose to put aside the relations of religion to society. The time is near, through the recent study of comparative religions it has been much hastened, when Christianity must measure itself with the stronger non-Christian systems, Mohammedanism, Hindooism and Brahminism, and these points of organization and adaptation to present life are the necessary steps of corporate and organized activity which must precede a right influence in this direction. From this point of view, and for many other reasons, the next Pan-Anglican Council will be watched with close and sympathetic interest by all bodies of Christians."

"The German Free Congregations" again.—A German Liberal writes in regard to the notice of the German Free Religious or Secularist Congregations which appeared in our issue, No. 7: "I cannot refrain from giving vent to a strong impression produced by the perusal of your interesting item on German Liberals. Although I acknowledge your statement is perfectly correct, in my opinion the article is liable to impress American readers with an erroneous view of German Free-Religious Congregations. It will lead them to believe that these German colonies of Free-thought in the United States maintain the same religious platform as the original Free Congregations in Germany, which were started by the revolutionary spirit of 1848. But WISCLECENUS' "Scripture or Spirit," and *The Free Thinker* of Milwaukee, by no means stand for the same principles, and SCHUNEMANN-POTT, of San Francisco, pursues a very different tendency from the venerated Pastor RUPP of Konigsberg. Social and religious radicalism has carried the American offshoot of Germany's *Freie Gemeinden* so far beyond their original goal, that on this modern platform there is no longer any place for these venerable founders of the Liberal movement. These last were imbued with a deep religious fervor, but their modern disciples, in their extreme aversion to religion, and emphatic atheism, are quite intolerant of all piety. SCHLEIERMACHER and PARKER are treated by them with more contempt than even the representatives of orthodoxy. Fraternizing with furious communism of the Paris type, they would rather co-operate with the Internationalist, or even the Ultramontane army, than with the liberals of the church. It is true that some leaders of the free-religious movement in Germany also, disappointed and disheartened, sank into atheism and materialism, but as a whole, it continues to display in the mother-country an elevated piety, which is much at variance with the marked irreligion of the American congregations. I decidedly deny, therefore, the claims which these champions of atheism in America make on the names of UHLICH, WISCLECENUS, RAU, RUPP, and other great leaders of religious reform in Germany. The prophetic mantle of these 'Friends of Light and Freedom' fell on very different shoulders. If I were to point out definitely a denomination which, in America, is the representative of their spirit, I would name the 'German Free-Protestant Cougregations' of the United States, who stand on about the same ground as the Unitarians and Universalists in this country, and the Reform party of Switzerland, and the Protestant Union (*Protestanten-Verein*) of Germany."

Of this association of Liberal German churches of which our friend speaks in the closing part of his letter, we shall give a brief accouut in the next number of the PAMPHLET MISSION, by way of supplement to the account given by us in No. 7, of the Atheistic or Secularist Congregations of Germans in America.

Farrar and his Critics.—M. D. CONWAY writes from London: "Canon FARRAR's denunciation of the doctrine of physical and eternal torments after death, in five sermons now published, has met with a response which seems to encourage him. What that response is may be partly gathered from the eight criticisms upon the sermons, from the pens of eminent London divines, printed in *The Contemporary Review* for April. Among these critics we have a prominent professor in Dublin University (JELLETT), a college principal (TULLOCH), a great high churchman (Dr. LITTLEDALE), the president of the Congregational Union of this country (BALDWIN BROWN), a leading independent (REV. EDWARD WHITE), a doctor of divinity of high rank (HUNT), and the professor of divinity at Dublin University (SALMON). The Rev. WILLIAM ARTHUR (president of the Wesleyan College at Belfast) and the Rev. Dr. MILLER, the only men who have taken up the cudgels and fight unambiguously for the biblical hell, find themselves confronted by an array of great names in the churches, who, with varying opinions, are yet unwilling to oppose FARRAR's position. Some are, indeed, evasive. JELLETT, while agreeing that eternal torment is 'repugnant to the moral sense,' surrounds himself with a fog; TULLOCH, while pronouncing SPURGEON's old-fashioned doctrine of hell 'extravagances,' is anxious that it should not be thought that God 'will love everybody;' WHITE believes in the annihilation of the wicked; SALMON thinks there is a 'possibility' that 'there may be some from whom evil will never be eradicated,' while he wishes hell put in the background; LITTLEDALE, the high church leader, amazes the world by declaring that the idea that death fixes man's doom, 'puts God on a moral level with the devisers of the most malignant revenge known to history—the deed known in Italy as *la gran vendetta*;' and, which is as important an utterance as any, the Rev. J. BALDWIN BROWN, president of the Congregational Union, declares himself as 'for years witnessing against the doctrine of everlasting torment, as horrible in itself, and staining with deep dishonor the justice as well as the love of God.'"

The article Mr. CONWAY speaks of, in the *Contemporary*, is followed in the May number of the same review, by a similar article from the pens of other eminent divines, with a result very nearly that reached in the first article. But Canon FARRAR does not permit the matter to rest here. In the June number he again rallies, and replies to his critics in detail, defending his heresies more stoutly than ever.

New Books.—Vol. 2 of "The Bible for Learners," coming down to the end of the Old Testament, and containing an index, is out. Rev. LYMAN ABBOTT, in *Harper's Magazine*, says "the work is delightful reading, and adds new vitality to the Scripture History."——Mrs. L. M. CHILDS' new book, "Aspirations of the World," is meeting with warm favor. Rev. J. W. CHADWICK compares it with CONWAY'S "Sa-

cred Anthology," and pronounces it "less mystical and richer on the practical and human side," than CONWAY'S book.——Prof. MAX MUELLER has a sufficiently wide hearing for his Westminster Abbey lectures. The first, "On the Perception of the Infinite," was not only published in *The Contemporary Review*, of May, but has appeared in German in the *Deutsche Rundschau*, and in Italian in the *Nuova Antologia*.——"Foundation Stones of the Church of the Unity," is the title of a book just published by Rev. GEO. CHAINEY, pastor of the Unitarian Society at Evansville, Ind.——JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE'S volume of "Memorial and Biographical Sketches" of leading American men and women whom Mr. CLARKE has personally known, has just reached the counters of the book stores.——G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS have recently published two volumes of sermons which will interest our readers, viz:—"The Rising and Setting Faith, and other Discourses," by Rev. O. B. FROTHINGHAM, and "Christ: His Nature and Work," by HOWARD CROSBY, Dr. BELLOWS, Dr. CHAPIN, and other eminent New York preachers.——M. RENAN is about to publish in Paris a sixth volume of his "Origins of Christianity;" he then contemplates a seventh on "Marcus Aurelius, and Pagan Wisdom," in which he will discuss what ancient civilization might have been without Christianity; and, perhaps, an eighth, which would reach to the final constitution of the "Catholic Church under Constantine."——"Old Forts Taken" is the significant title of five lectures on Endless Punishment and Future Life, by Rev. Dr. MINER of Boston, just issued in book form by the Universalist Publishing House.——A new thing under the sun is "Buddhism and Christianity Face to Face; or an Oral Discussion between Rev. MIGETTUWATTE, a Buddist Priest, and Rev. D. SILVA, an English Clergyman, held at Pautura, Ceylon," with an introduction and annotation, by J. M. PEEBLES. It is a most hopeful sign of the times that the religions of the old world are beginning to appear to us in representations of believers in them. Too long we have been obliged to see them solely in books written by those who approached them from without, and could hardly help being more or less prejudiced against them. Now that men from the inside are beginning to speak, we may hope to get much nearer the truth about them. We venture to say that the ordinary reader will get more information about what is the real spirit and essence of Buddhism, and how it compares and contrasts with Christianity, by reading this little book, (costing only a half-dollar,) than he can obtain from any other half-dozen volumes in the English language. It is for sale by COLBY & RICH, Boston.

Bluffton, a Novel, by M. J. Savage.—Rev. Mr. SAVAGE is known to most of our readers as a former clergyman of the Orthodox Congregational Church, who, by dint of earnest study and fearless thinking, found his way out of the old theology into the liberal ranks,

and is to-day the radical minister of one of the largest Unitarian congregations in Boston. A preacher and lecturer of increasing reputation, he is distinguished for his intellectual vigor and fearlessness, great industry, and an unusual mastery in the art of putting things. Few men in the liberal pulpit understand better how to make attractive and comprehensible to the popular mind, the severer problems of modern science and philosophy, and to win a large hearing for radical ideas in religion and life. In his present venture he enters a new field of literary effort, and with credit to himself and the cause he represents. His novel, Bluffton, ranks well above the average fiction of the day, and has additional features of interest in its theological and personal character. It is just to infer that Bluffton is to some extent an autobiography, and records for us Mr. SAVAGE'S own spiritual experience in breaking away from the limitations of his orthodox training, and following the vision of truth "into fields and pastures new." To portray to his past and present friends the processes and struggles which accompanied this change of opinion, to justify his defection from the faith of his fathers, and make his own experience valuable to other minds in like condition, Mr. SAVAGE has chosen the fitting form of a novel. From a literary point of view his book is very creditable; he writes in strong, terse English, his descriptions of natural scenery and events often rise into eloquence, and the plot shows considerable inventive skill. The incidents and characters are such as one would expect to meet with during the glad and trying experiences of a ministry in a Western river town. The pious hypocrite, mighty in faith but poor in performance, the stern but upright bigot, the rude philosopher of the bluff, the parish gossips, the heretical saint, the excitement of a church trial,—all are portrayed with force and skill. Chapter XIII, which describes the struggle of the minister in his study with his growing thoughts and subtle temptations, is really admirable; and somewhat later on we have a significant interview with two "liberal orthodox" clergymen, who urge him to conceal his doubts and stay within the fold. Side by side with this trial of soul, runs a romantic story of love under difficulties, which serves to intensify the minister's mental suffering by the additional temptation it offers him to be unfaithful to his highest conviction of truth and duty. A considerable part of the book is made up of theological talks, in which the hero of the tale reveals his growing unfaith in the dogmas of the church, and his acceptance of larger verities in the domain of science and rational trust. If we have any criticism to offer, it is that the orthodox side of the questions discussed in these conversations is rather weakly presented. The skeptic is good, very good, but might we not have a better believer? Perhaps, however, this was intentional on the part of the writer. He does not desire to report a controversy or to furnish us with an unanswerable argument; he simply desires to indicate the mental processes of his

central character, the steps in his progressive emancipation, and the results he has arrived at. It is perhaps needless to say that the book ends satisfactorily with the triumph of truth and love over error and malice. The large circulation of this little work is a thing to be desired by religious liberals. It will reach and influence minds not likely to be affected by radical preaching or theological treatises. In the popular guise of fiction, it deals vigorous blows at the fallacies of the prevailing religion, and indicates the true direction for the awakened reason and conscience. Let it be read and circulated by all whose hearts are in the work of religious enlightenment and reform. —C. W. W.

Liberalism among the English Congregationalists.—A very promising movement seems to be going on among the English Congregationalists in the direction of a broader fellowship and a more rational theology. An English writer in the June number of the *Unitarian Review*, says that some of the Congregationalist churches "seem to be exactly in the position of the Boston churches just before the opening of the Unitarian controversy in that city: that is to say, the ministers are quietly preaching anti-Trinitarian opinions with the approval of their congregations. Every now and then they get pulled up a little, and then preach a few orthodox sermons. Their brother ministers are afraid to blame them for fear of a division of the Congregational body into two parties. A good deal of silent blame is given them; a good deal of supposed approval is timidly shown. We only need," continues the writer from whom we quote, "something like the *Panoplist Review* over again, to cause a like blaze here, and to make them, as in Boston in those days, adopt the name of Unitarian Congregational."

SILAS FARRINGTON, in a recent letter to the *Register* gives some information on the same subject. He writes: "A few months since there was a meeting at Leicester of some of the ministers of the Congregational body who longed to base religious fellowship and communion on spiritual sympathy rather than on intellectual agreement. Among them were some men of strictly evangelical conviction, but who nevertheless had breadth of spiritual appreciation, and love towards those who were a little off the narrow evangelical track. Such a man, we believe, is Mr. GASCOINE, who read a paper at the Leicester meeting. Mr. PICTON, of London, is not so evangelical, perhaps, but ranks as a Christian theist. Mr. MARK WILKS, another London preacher of power and popularity, a man of undoubted excellence and worth, as well as of spiritual power, has one of the largest Congregational congregations in London. These, and others, dared to consider, at Leicester, whether men might not unite upon a purely religious basis,—upon spiritual rather than intellectual grounds; whether it were not possible, as Christians, to be liberal rather than dogmatic. This has been too much for the

old evangelical instincts of the Congregational body. If there were a Plymouth Rock in England, we should soon see them standing upon it, and swearing that they believe the creed, and nothing but the creed, and every word of it; and that there is no other fellowship to be allowed under heaven than the Congregational creed. But as there is no Plymouth Rock over here, the chief priests and elders of this people have drawn up a doctrinal test, to be submitted and probably passed at the next Congregational Union, whereby he will undoubtedly be damned with Congregational damnation who cannot submit to its intellectual presentments. Of course these liberal men will not submit. Just what will become of their secession, or their expulsion, when it shall have come to pass, it is difficult to predict. We learn that during the London Anniversary Meetings, in June, they are to have another meeting, and, if possible, do something to strengthen their position."

Mr. Murray and his Boston Sensation.—In connection with the agitation of the Congregational waters over in England, by those who want a broader fellowship than one of creeds, it is interesting to notice the proposition of Rev. W. H. H. MURRAY to establish a great undenominational church in Boston; that is to say, a church which shall not only be without creed-limitations, but which shall not even be Unitarian, but shall open its doors of membership and management to all the leading Christian denominations. Some of the words which Mr. MURRAY is uttering in setting forth his ideas, are certainly most remarkable as coming from any man who claims the orthodox name and fellowship. Here are some of them: "In the highlands of faith there is but one clan, and Christ is the head of it, and all of us clansmen are called by his name. In my ministerial capacity I am a Christian. If Congregationalism means that, then I am a Congregationalist. If Methodism means that, then I am a Methodist. If Baptist, then I am a Baptist. If Unitarian, if Episcopalian, if Universalist, if Spiritualist, if Swedenborgian, if Presbyterian, if Ritualalist—if these all mean Christian, then am I, as a minister, all these. I fellowship them all in so far as they represent the true nature and purpose of Christ." These are such utterances as Unitarians have been familiar with ever since CHANNING. The only remarkable thing about them now is, of course, the source from which they come. We are hearing, and have been for twenty years, a great deal about "undenominational" and "unsectarian" movements. In ninety-nine cases in a hundred the words are utterly untruthful, for though the movements may contemplate, in some measure, an ignoring of denominational lines as between certain "evangelical" or "orthodox" sects, they contemplate nothing of the kind as between Orthodox and Liberals. But this movement of Mr. MURRAY'S has a look of genuine undenominationalism about it. So far, then, Liberals will give it sympathy and

bid it a hearty God-speed. But there is something else to be considered in judging of this scheme besides the liberality and catholicity of its spirit. Is it practicable? Can it be made to work? Is it what Boston needs? Does Boston contain four hundred men whose faith in Mr. MURRAY is so strong—should we not say so romantic?—as to cause them to subscribe the $500 each which will be necessary to build the edifice required? Must not churches of such enormous size as Mr. MURRAY proposes prove utterly unwieldy—ecclesiastical "Great Easterns?" Or, if it is possible to carry them on with something of *eclat* and apparent success, yet can the work that they do be anything like so really valuable work as that done by churches small enough for the people to know one another, and the pastor to know the people? Doesn't it smack of snobbery to provide that the chairman of the Board of Trustees shall always be the Governor of the State? Will a Board of Trustees, made up of representatives of different denominations, be likely to harmonize in their policy and action? These are some of the questions which persist on rising to mind as one contemplates this scheme of Mr. MURRAY. Perhaps, however, they suggest no difficulties which may not be surmounted. Certainly Mr. MURRAY's past career shows that he can not only plan but execute unexpected things. We are by no means sure that in his unique church scheme he has not a great seed-thought for our time.

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